

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1.

No navigational difficulties were met because of the good radio beacon and the lighthouse of Burgas. The ship dropped anchor off the harbor and was boarded by a pilot. He handed an English text of the harbor and customs regulations.

2. The ship was berthed alongside the ore pier in a northeastern section of the harbor basin. A twelve-man party did not board the ship even after she had made fast until the captain had prepared the ship's papers and custom documents in accordance with the harbor regulations. The customs examination was performed as usual. No harbor permits were issued to shoregoers. An order was issued that each shoregoer had to produce his discharge book for the sentry posted at the ship, who checked the man by comparing him with the picture in that book. Subsequently, the shoregoer had to report to the custom house where the shore permit authorizing the holder to go ashore between 9 a.m. and 12 midnight was issued. This permit had to be handed back to the custom house officer on the holder's return to his ship.

3. According to a regulation in force in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian flag had to be flown at the masthead of the foremast all the time and was not allowed to be hauled down until the ship had left port. Ships which had no Bulgarian flag received it from Inflat. Ships of all nationalities can buy any kind and quantity of fresh provisions.

4. ship took on about 4,000 tons of ore and drew 18 feet with this cargo. The loading operations took two days and two nights. Small-sized ore mixed with mud was loaded with cranes and the ship's own gear from railroad

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(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "#")

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cars and dumps on the pier. Three 7-ton cranes and a large crane were located on the ore pier. Actually only one crane was used for the operation, which dumped the ore aboard in tubs rather than with grabs. The duration of the loading operations depended on the arrival of the cars, because space on the pier was too small to store large dumps of ore. It was certain that the ship received the amount of ore she had ordered. The stowage plan had to be discussed with Inflat prior to the beginning of the loading operations. In the event of the necessity of deviation from the original stowing plan, the harbor master had to give his approval. Other ships lying in harbor included

[redacted] vessel loading grain from cars; one Russian ship of about 3,000 tons unloading cases and bags; a tug-boat of about 150 horsepower and several small lighters. [redacted] ships loading grain must have clean holds. Subsequently a three-man commission checks all holds and collects all dust or dirt in small bags. The contents are microscopically examined to make sure that they do not contain any meal worms. Should there still be such worms, the ship will be submitted to degaussing operations for three days.

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5. The Bulgarian longshoremen only entered into conversation when they believed they were unobserved. On such occasions, most of them proved to be pro-German and rather frankly criticized the system. The winch gang sent aboard consisted of women and girls. One winch woman who talked with a German sailor for about five minutes was taken ashore by a civilian and replaced by another woman. She was never seen again. Cargo trimming was carried out by men according to instructions by the ship's officers. The trimmers were quite prepared to obey orders, carrying out any order given by the ship's officers. However, it was made known that in case of complaints about insufficient trimming work a three-man commission would come aboard to decide on the issue. The zeal of the trimmers was normal, and no instigation to fulfill a quota nor any excessive strain on the men was observed.

6. The rate of exchange for shore leave was 86 Pfennig to one leva. Money which had not been spent had to be returned to the Inflat agent through the captain. As it was practically impossible to buy useful things ashore, only small amounts of money were asked for. The observers entered two restaurants which, however, were not well attended, and were used exclusively by civilians. A bottle of wine cost 8.5 leva. No queues were observed in front of the shops. Food shops, stationary shops and two shops reminded one of the pre-currency situation in West Germany. Business at butcher shops as well as in dairy and fish shops was rather brisk. There seemed to be no restrictions. Fruit and vegetables were not seen. Articles produced in East Germany were displayed in some larger shops, for example, cameras of four different types, prism binoculars and fireproof glassware. A pair of medium-quality Zeiss binoculars would cost the equivalent of about 188 west marks. It could not be stated whether any such items could be bought and exported. In comparison with the population in East Germany [redacted]

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[redacted] the Bulgarians were better fed, but more poorly clad than the West Germans. The cloaks of the crewmembers were admired everywhere. No elegant clothing, even to a modest degree, was observed. On the other hand, the state of nutrition and health of the population apparently was quite excellent [redacted] There seemed to be no shortage of Bulgarian cigarettes, as the longshoremen smoked heavily during the loading operations and, in most cases, did not accept cigarettes offered by crewmembers. No kind of black market or gray market was observed. It was only noted that the buying power of the population seemed to be greater than the supply of commodities, as several crewmembers were asked to sell items they had about them. For a wrist watch, worth about 25 West German marks, the sum of 100 leva was offered. No contact with the female inhabitants could be established, although it was learned from other ships, that girls could be had for stockings. No crewmember had a feeling that he was shadowed while on leave ashore. The crew did not go to the movies, for which the tickets cost between three and six leva, since the advertisements displayed obviously indicated that only very old and worn films were shown. It was not possible to determine the country of origin of the films. A large park with music pavilions which, however, were closed at the time was located just northwest of the town. [redacted] weekly concerts and

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dancing parties were held there during the summer months. There was very little automobile traffic on the streets and only a few rather outmoded Dodges and Fords were observed. No modern car, or even one in good condition, was seen.

7. No vessels or personnel of the Bulgarian Navy were observed. At 6 p.m. only a few soldiers in khaki coats with broad Soviet epaulets were seen ashore. They wore oval cockades at the caps. No war vessels or airplanes were observed. The weather was comparatively mild considering the season.

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many ships no longer observe the prescribed swept channel. the respective part of the Black Sea had reportedly been mined by the German Navy, but no mines had ever been laid.

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9. Anchor was dropped off the harbor and the customs regulations were brought aboard. The radio equipment as well as the binoculars and cameras had to be sealed. On 12 February 1955, the ship put into harbor and tied up with her starboard side to the ore pier in the northeastern section of the harbor basin. A six-man commission boarded the ship before the lines had been made fast to shore. The crew had to assemble on deck and each member was checked with his passport picture. The clearing officials were by far kinder and more obliging than, for example, those in Rumania. A sentry armed with a rifle was posted at the ship. He wore a lamb-fur coat with an ear-flap fur cap. No badges were seen.
10. Close to the pier a ship could load cargo up to 21 feet of draft, and one meter away from the pier she could draw as much as 23 feet. Buoys were moored in mid-harbor permitting the ship to breast off. Two 7.5-ton cranes and one 50-ton crane were on the ore pier. A total cargo of 4,000 tons of ore and 200 tons of bagged rice was taken on in four days. The ore which arrived in railroad cars was dumped on the pier and subsequently loaded aboard by grab cranes. The ore did not arrive continuously and this caused occasional interruptions in the loading operations. Work was done around the clock in three shifts and a total of 800 tons per shift could be loaded if ore was readily available.
11. Shore leave was granted until 12 midnight. The crewmen went wherever they wanted and did not have a feeling of being shadowed. The sailors had the opportunity of buying "love" for cheap cotton stockings or underwear. There was actually nothing for sale, not even cigarettes. The streets were rather thinly populated, admittedly because of cold weather. During the evening hours the streets were practically deserted. Street lighting in the city was poor; lighting on the quays, however, was excellent.
12. Only a few soldiers were met in the streets. Their uniforms were similar to those of the Soviet soldiers seen on previous occasions in Constanta. No navy uniform was observed, nor were any war vessels or airplanes seen.
13. A large number of workers and all foremen as well as the agent and the Inflat chief spoke fluent German. The two Inflat members declared that they had been trained in the USSR for two or three years and seemed to toe the line. the Bulgarian Navy was stationed in Stalin (formerly Varna) and this port, which previously had been closed to western ships, would be opened to merchant shipping in April or May 1955. utterly poor situation in the consumers' goods market.

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Soviet influence was actually felt in

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the party control and at the administration offices, as Soviets were working there. On the other hand, all commercial and military issues were decided by Bulgarians. Some members of the border police had received training in the USSR.

14. From 6 p.m. on 17 February 1955 to 11 a.m. on 18 February 1955, the ship took on 2,500 tons of ore which was lying on the ore pier ready to be shipped. The ore was taken on by means of tubs lifted by 7-ton cranes and occasionally also with the ship's own loading gear. For each hoist four or five tons of ore were shoveled into the tubs and subsequently first dumped on the floors of the holds. One large crane and three 7-ton cranes were on the pier. In addition, grabs also were seen there, probably intended for handling large-sized ore. The ore taken on by the [redacted] vessel, however, was too thin and had about 5 % water. [redacted]

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[redacted] in Constanta [redacted] a total of 2,500 tons of grain were taken on in 21 hours by means of four mobile tubular shoots.

15. As compared with Burgas, where both officials and workmen showed an open-hearted and absolutely friendly attitude, the people in Constanta were very curt, reserved and stand-offish. [redacted]

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the population of Burgas seemed to be pro-German. [redacted]

during the period the German Navy was there, the conditions were far better than at present although there was no reason to complain about the food situation. Consumer goods, in particular textiles and footwear, were even more difficult to procure than during the war.

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